

FRENCH REVOLUTION AS A WORLD FORCE 303

temporaries in every country thought and felt about it, how they argued and how they acted." Friends and foes of the principles of '89 were at one in emphasizing the compelling power of their appeal; and men like Burke and Tom Paine, Kant and Joseph de Maistre, who agreed in nothing else, were convinced that the problems raised by the Revolution concerned humanity as a whole. "As I look at the map of the world," cried Anacharsis Cloots, "it seems to me as if all other countries had vanished and only France exists, with her rays filling the universe."

To measure the immediate and ultimate effects of the Revolution as a world force* with its three doctrines of equal rights, popular sovereignty and nationality, would require a course of lectures ; and we must content ourselves with a glance- at the two most highly educated states outside France at the end of the eighteenth century. The first voices in England were those of congratulation. Fox's exclamation that the fall of the Bastille was much the greatest and best event that had ever happened expressed, if in somewhat exuberant terms, the disinterested satisfaction with which the great majority of Englishmen witnessed the downfall of a despotic government. To men like Price and Priestley, Wordsworth, Southey and Coleridge, it was the beginning of a new era of progress and enlightenment, the realization of those generous visions of perfectibility which floated before the noblest minds in the latter part of the eighteenth century and received their classic expression in Condorcet's *Sketch of the Progress of the Human Mind*.

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven.

'the publication of Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution* in the autumn of 1790 gave a rude shock to

public opinion.
He had been untouched by the generous emotions which affected most of his contemporaries, and the women's march on Versailles convinced him that nothing but evil would result. His argument was vitiated by ignorance of the political and economic condition of France. He failed to realize that the *ancien regime* was rotten to the core, that feudalism was doomed, that the Assembly had already lifted an immense burden from the shoulders of the people. But the permanent value of the *Reflections* lies not in the criticism of the Revolution but in the discussion of the method of political change, which in turn